

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A tire vulcanizing equipment comprising:

a vulcanizing station having placing parts for placing tire mold assemblies movable in a closed state and a housing shelf vertically having plural stages of the placing parts;

an opening and closing station having a placing part for placing the tire mold assembly, an opening and closing device for opening and closing the tire mold assembly placed on the placing part of the opening and closing station, a carrying-out device for carrying a vulcanized tire from the tire mold assembly and a carrying-in device for carrying an unvulcanized tire to the tire mold assembly; and

[[a]] two transfer ~~station~~ stations for transferring the tire mold assembly between a selected stage of the placing parts of the housing shelf and the placing part of the opening and closing station by a rotating action of the transfer ~~station~~ stations and a rising and falling action of the transfer ~~station~~ stations along the housing shelf of the vulcanizing station, said transfer stations comprising two independently vertically movable portions for simultaneously raising and lowering two tire mold assemblies; and
means for transferring a tire mold assembly between said transfer stations.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A tire vulcanizing equipment comprising:

a vulcanizing station having a housing shelf vertically having plural stages of placing parts for placing tire mold assemblies movable in closed state, which have pipings for supplying and discharging a vulcanizing/heating medium to the tire mold assemblies placed thereon;

an opening and closing station having a placing part for placing a tire mold assembly, an opening and closing device for opening and closing the tire mold assembly placed on the

placing part of the opening and closing station, a carrying-out device for carrying a vulcanized tire from the tire mold assembly and a carrying-in device for carrying a unvulcanized tire to the tire mold assembly, the opening and closing station being connected to a carrying-out line of vulcanized tires to a following step and a carrying-in line of unvulcanized tires; and

[[a]] two transfer ~~station~~ stations for transferring the tire mold assembly between the placing part of a selected stage of the housing shelf and the placing part of the opening and closing station by a rotating action of the transfer ~~station~~ stations and a rising and falling action of the transfer ~~station~~ stations along the housing shelf of the vulcanizing station, said transfer station comprising two independently vertically movable portions for simultaneously raising and lowering two tire molds; and

means for transferring a tire mold between said transfer stations.

Claim 3 (Previously presented): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 1, further comprising:

an auxiliary station having a placing part for placing the tire mold assembly and an opening and closing device for opening and closing the tire mold assembly placed on the placing part of the auxiliary station.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 1, wherein

the opening and closing station is connected to a carrying-out line of vulcanized tires to a following step and a carrying-in line of unvulcanized tires.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 3, wherein

the auxiliary station has a carrying-out device for carrying vulcanized tires from the tire mold assembly and a carrying-in device for carrying unvulcanized tires to the tire mold assembly.

Claim 6 (Previously presented): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 3, wherein

the auxiliary station is connected to a carrying-out line of vulcanized tires to a following step and a carrying-in line of unvulcanized tires.

Claim 7 (Original): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 3, wherein a mold replacement/maintenance base is attached to the auxiliary station.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 1, wherein

the transfer station has a rising and falling transfer device comprising a first delivering mechanism capable of delivering the tire mold assembly and switching the guide direction of the tire mold assembly to a selected placing part direction, a placing part for placing the tire mold assembly received by the first delivering mechanism, and a lifting mechanism for raising and lowering the first delivering mechanism and the placing part of the rising and falling transfer device along the housing shelf.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 8, wherein

the transfer station has a rotating transfer device comprising a second delivering mechanism for delivering the tire mold assembly, a placing part for placing the tire mold assembly received by the second delivering mechanism, and a turntable rotatable so as to set the guide direction of the tire mold assembly by the second delivering mechanism to a desired placing part direction.

Claim 10 (Original): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 8, wherein a plurality of transfer stations is provided, so that the transfer of the tire mold assembly is performed between the respective transfer stations.

Claim 11 (Original): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 1, wherein the vulcanizing station has a plurality of circularly arranged placing parts, and the transfer station is arranged in the center of the same circumference as the circularly arranged placing parts, so that the transfer of the tire mold assembly between the circularly arranged placing part and the placing part of the opening and closing station is performed by the rotating action of the transfer station.

Claim 12 (Original): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 11, wherein an auxiliary station having a placing part for placing the tire mold assembly and an opening and closing device for opening and closing the tire mold assembly placed on the placing part is further provided on the same circumference, so that the transfer station performs the transfer of the tire mold assembly also between the placing part of the auxiliary station and the placing part of the vulcanizing station.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 11, wherein

two or more of said plurality of said circularly arranged placing parts are arranged in a row, and are mutually connected through guide rails allowing the movement of the tire mold assembly therebetween.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): A tire vulcanizing equipment according to claim 11, wherein

the transfer station comprises a delivering mechanism for delivering the tire mold assembly and a turntable rotatable so as to set the guide direction of the tire mold assembly by the delivering mechanism to the direction of a selected circularly arranged placing part.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A tire vulcanizing equipment comprising:

a vulcanizing station having a housing shelf having plural stages of placing parts for placing tire mold assemblies movable in a closed state, which have pipings for supplying and discharging a vulcanizing/heating medium to the tire mold assemblies placed thereon;

an opening and closing station having a placing part for placing the tire mold assembly, an opening and closing device for opening and closing the tire mold assembly placed on the placing part of said opening and closing station, a carrying-out device for carrying a vulcanized tire from the tire mold assembly, and a carrying-in device for carrying a unvulcanized tire to the tire mold assembly, the opening and closing station being connected to a carrying-out line of vulcanized tires to a following step and a carrying-in line of unvulcanized tires; and

[[a]] two transfer station stations for performing the transfer of the tire mold assembly between a selected stage of the placing parts of the housing shelf and the placing part of the

opening and closing station by a rotating action of the transfer ~~station~~ stations and a rising and falling action of the transfer ~~station~~ stations along the housing shelf of the vulcanizing station, said transfer station comprising two independently vertically movable portions for simultaneously raising and lowering two tire molds; and

means for transferring a tire mold between said two independently vertically movable portions.

Claim 16 (Cancelled).

Claim 17 (New): A tire vulcanizing equipment comprising:

a vulcanizing station having placing parts for placing tire mold assemblies movable in a closed state and a housing shelf vertically having plural stages of the placing parts;

an opening and closing station having a placing part for placing the tire mold assembly, an opening and closing device for opening and closing the tire mold assembly placed on the placing part of the opening and closing station, a carrying-out device for carrying a vulcanized tire from the tire mold assembly and a carrying-in device for carrying an unvulcanized tire to the tire mold assembly; and

two transfer stations for transferring the tire mold assembly between a selected stage of the placing parts of the housing shelf and the placing part of the opening and closing station by a rising and falling action of the transfer stations along the housing shelf of the vulcanizing station, said transfer station comprising two independently vertically movable portions for simultaneously raising and lowering two tire molds; and

means for transferring a tire mold between said transfer stations.

Claim 18 (New): A tire vulcanizing equipment comprising:

a vulcanizing station having a housing shelf vertically having plural stages of placing parts for placing tire mold assemblies movable in closed state, which have pipings for supplying and discharging a vulcanizing/heating medium to the tire mold assemblies placed thereon;

an opening and closing station having a placing part for placing a tire mold assembly, an opening and closing device for opening and closing the tire mold assembly placed on the placing part of the opening and closing station, a carrying-out device for carrying a vulcanized tire from the tire mold assembly and a carrying-in device for carrying a unvulcanized tire to the tire mold assembly, the opening and closing station being connected to a carrying-out line of vulcanized tires to a following step and a carrying-in line of unvulcanized tires; and

two transfer stations for transferring the tire mold assembly between the placing part of a selected stage of the housing shelf and the placing part of the opening and closing station by a rising and falling action of the transfer stations along the housing shelf of the vulcanizing station, said transfer station comprising two independently vertically movable portions for simultaneously raising and lowering two tire molds; and

means for transferring a tire mold between said transfer stations.

Claim 19 (New): A tire vulcanizing equipment comprising:

a vulcanizing station having a housing shelf having plural stages of placing parts for placing tire mold assemblies movable in a closed state, which have pipings for supplying and discharging a vulcanizing/heating medium to the tire mold assemblies placed thereon;

an opening and closing station having a placing part for placing the tire mold assembly, an opening and closing device for opening and closing the tire mold assembly placed on the placing part of said opening and closing station, a carrying-out device for

carrying a vulcanized tire from the tire mold assembly, and a carrying-in device for carrying a
unvulcanized tire to the tire mold assembly, the opening and closing station being connected
to a carrying-out line of vulcanized tires to a following step and a carrying-in line of
unvulcanized tires; and

two transfer stations for performing the transfer of the tire mold assembly between a
selected stage of the placing parts of the housing shelf and the placing part of the opening and
closing station by a rising and falling action of the transfer stations along the housing shelf of
the vulcanizing station, said transfer station comprising two independently vertically movable
portions for simultaneously raising and lowering two tire molds; and

means for transferring a tire mold between said transfer stations.